

2021 -- H 5034

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

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A N A C T

RELATING TO DOMESTIC RELATIONS - SOLEMNIZATION OF MARRIAGES

Introduced By: Representative Katherine S. Kazarian

Date Introduced: January 15, 2021

Referred To: House Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 15-3-5 of the General Laws in Chapter 15-3 entitled "Solemnization  
2 of Marriages" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **15-3-5. Officials empowered to join persons in marriage.**

4 Every ordained clergy or elder in good standing; every justice of the supreme court,  
5 superior court, family court, workers' compensation court, district court or traffic tribunal; the clerk  
6 of the supreme court; every clerk, administrative clerk, or general chief clerk of a superior court,  
7 family court, district court, or traffic tribunal; magistrates, special or general magistrates of the  
8 superior court, family court, traffic tribunal or district court; administrative clerks of the district  
9 court; administrators of the workers' compensation court; every former justice or judge and former  
10 administrator of these courts; every former chief clerk of the district court; every former clerk,  
11 administrative clerk, or general chief clerk of a superior court; the secretary of the senate; elected  
12 clerks of the general assembly; any former secretary of the senate; any former elected clerk of the  
13 general assembly who retires after July 1, 2007; judges of the United States appointed pursuant to  
14 Article III of the United States Constitution; bankruptcy judges appointed pursuant to Article I of  
15 the United States Constitution; and United States magistrate judges appointed pursuant to federal  
16 law, may join persons in marriage in any city or town in this state; and every justice and every  
17 former justice of the municipal courts of the cities and towns in this state and of the police court of  
18 the town of Johnston and the administrator of the Johnston municipal court, while he or she is  
19 serving as an administrator, and every probate judge and every former probate judge may join

1 persons in marriage in any city or town in this state, and wardens of the town of New Shoreham  
2 may join persons in marriage in New Shoreham. In addition to the foregoing, the governor may  
3 designate any person who is eligible to vote in the state of Rhode Island to solemnize a particular  
4 marriage on a particular date and in a particular city or town, and may for cause at any time revoke  
5 such designation. In the case of persons so designated by the governor, the secretary of state shall  
6 promulgate rules and regulations as may be necessary to implement and carry out the provisions of  
7 this section. The secretary of state shall issue a certificate of designation upon payment of twenty-  
8 five dollars (\$25.00). The payment of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) shall be for applications  
9 delivered by mail, facsimile or hand. All applications submitted electronically shall pay a fee of  
10 twenty dollars (\$20.00). Upon payment, a certificate of designation shall be issued. The certificate  
11 shall expire upon completion of the solemnization. The fees collected under this section shall be  
12 deposited into the general fund.

13 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
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RELATING TO DOMESTIC RELATIONS - SOLEMNIZATION OF MARRIAGES

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1           This act would allow the governor to designate any person who is eligible to vote to  
2 solemnize a marriage within the state of Rhode Island on a particular day and within a particular  
3 city or town. Said authorization would expire upon completion of the marriage or the following  
4 day of the scheduled marriage, whichever occurs first. A fee in the amount of twenty-five dollars  
5 (\$25.00) would be a prerequisite and would be payable to the secretary of state.

6           This act would take effect upon passage.

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